

WAM

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

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Weisman Art Museum Presents a Major Survey Exhibition, *We Are Working All the Time!*, by Multimedia Artist Piotr Szyhalski



August 2, 2022, Minneapolis, MN: Weisman Art Museum (WAM) is pleased to present *Piotr Szyhalski: We Are Working All the Time!*, on view August 20 — December 31, 2022. This survey exhibition features works in a variety of media across three decades of Szyhalski's prolific and pioneering practice, including poster design, web projects, mail art, painting, installation, and public performance. The exhibition will include a number of artist-led "activations" in and around WAM, with moments of performance, printmaking, and in-gallery "office hours" by Szyhalski on select Fridays throughout the show's run.

A Polish-born and -trained, American multimedia artist, Szyhalski has built a dynamic, richly varied body of work over the last thirty years and has exhibited in galleries and museums around the world. He is Professor of Design and Media Arts at Minneapolis College of Art and Design; his work

as an educator is deeply intertwined with his artistic practice. This survey is the first exhibition to feature artworks spanning the breadth of his extraordinary career, critically considered together.



Most recently, Szyhalski is best known for his daily chronicle of life in America during the height of the pandemic: *COVID 19: Labor Camp Report* (2021). For the Report he created a new, hand-drawn poster each day for 225 days—a vivid visual digest of current “news shrapnel”—shared via the Labor Camp Instagram feed. The COVID Report posters, which received national and international press attention, will be on view as part of the exhibition at WAM—all the more compelling when experienced in the context of ideas threaded through his larger body of work.

Szyhalski started his training in Poland, at the time under martial law, in the midst of a rising tide of sweeping change known as *Solidarność* (Solidarity); his early career was steeped in the artistic milieu of the postwar generation of Polish conceptual artists,

whose politics both before and after the workers' revolution were marked by a persistent skepticism about totalizing views of any kind.



As a cross-media artist working deliberately in resistance to the unique, precious object, Szyhalski's work is difficult to present, catalog, and reproduce. Much of his work is ephemeral and insistently of the moment, including time-based, multimedia performative works and unique interactive pieces not made to be collected at all. He imagines the work, once produced, as let go and given to others in the way it is used, contemplated, and remembered.

Given the dynamic nature of his artistic practice, the work of producing a survey exhibition was especially difficult. To honor his practice and core beliefs, WAM collaborated closely with the artist in the production of *Piotr Szyhalski: We Are Working All The Time!* to determine which objects, remnants, and reiterations would be included in the galleries and accompanying book.

The exhibition catalog, published by the Weisman and edited by senior curator Diane Mullin, includes long overdue new scholarship on Szyhalski's career and close to a hundred images, placing the artist's work in the larger, international context of contemporary art, from the 1980s to today. Together, the survey exhibition and

accompanying book offer a new, more comprehensive view of Szyhalski's *Labor Camp*, physically and theoretically, than ever before compiled.



Exhibition dates: August 20 - December 31, 2022

Media Preview

Monday, August 15, 11 a.m. - noon

Weisman Art Museum | Coffee and pastries will be provided.

An early look at the exhibition for members of the press with artist Piotr Szyhalski and curator Diane Mullin. Interview and photo opportunities available. **RSVP by Fri, August 12 by emailing susannah@umn.edu.**

[Press images, captions, and credits are available here >>](#)

Exhibition-related events

Opening Celebration: *Piotr Szyhalski: We Are Working All the Time!*

Thursday, September 15, 6:30 - 9 p.m.

Tickets: General admission, \$25; WAM members, \$20; Free for students

Cash bar and light snacks.

Piotr Szyhalski: *Office Hours*

Select Fridays, September - December 2022, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

In-gallery activations and informal opportunities to chat with the artist on select Fridays throughout the run of the exhibition.

Activation: *Walk About*

Friday, October 7, 11 a.m. - 2 p.m.

Free, but registration is required

Join the artist for a “walk about” and help carry his block-long, screenprinted banner through campus.

Study Night: WAWATT + WAM Collective

Wednesday, October 26, 5 - 8 p.m.

Free, but registration is required

Artist Piotr Szyhalski will be collaborating with student groups across campus to create and screenprint a new series of *We Are Working All the Time!* posters in languages that are important to the UMN campus and student body.

Manure and Poetry Performance, Nr. 3

Wednesday, December 14, 6:30 - 8 p.m.

Tickets: Pay-as-you-wish; Free for students

A remix revival of “An Evening with the Labor Camp Orchestra,” first performed at the Weisman in 2007, riffing on bits and pieces, images and gestures drawn from the sound and video pieces spanning Szyhalski’s body of performance works over the years.

About the Weisman Art Museum

Since its origin in 1934, Weisman Art Museum has been a teaching museum for the University of Minnesota. Today, education remains central to the museum’s mission to create art experiences that spark discovery, critical thinking, and transformation, linking the University and the community. The Weisman is located at 333 East River Road, Minneapolis, on the University of Minnesota campus. Gallery admission and membership are always free. For more information, visit www.wam.umn.edu.

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